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Executive Registry

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 10, 1964

MEMORANDUM TO THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE
DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

We have been somewhat concerned about our procedures in requesting security name checks, particularly from files of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, for appointees to the federal service. Such procedures are an essential part of any effective security program.

In most instances it would seem desirable to request such checks prior to serious consideration being given an individual, and most certainly before a firm commitment is made to the interested party or parties. Not only should this be observed in the respective Departments and Agencies, but also in instances in which recommendations for appointments are made by Departments or Agencies to the White House.

These procedures can prevent considerable embarrassment both to the government and to the potential employee himself. Irreparable harm can be done to a person's reputation in instances where publicity is given to his possible appointment to a government position, yet subsequent security checks result in a decision to suspend action on the appointment.

It would be unfortunate if undesirable individuals were put on the federal payroll simply because sufficient precautions were not taken prior to their appointment. This is merely sound business sense and should not be construed as an unwarranted invasion of privacy or violation of any person's constitutional rights.

Common sense must naturally be exercised in the administration of name check requests. For example, high-ranking military personnel who have possessed top-ranking clearance normally would not require security checks prior to appointment in the civilian service.

It would be desirable for all Departments to examine their procedures in the above regard. This practice is in effect at the White House now and will be strictly adhered to in the future.

Walter Jenkins

Walter Jenkins
Special Assistant
to the President

*Does not apply to us, but we will
comply with last paragraph nevertheless.
Please send on to Security.

*Note on buckslip to EA/DCI.